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In Art Design & Cultural Heritage

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In Art Design & Cultural Heritage

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The Relationship between Place and Hallmark Event; Malaysian Cultural Context

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Abstract— The tourism industry has been one of the major key-economic growths in Malaysia. Exploration of different types of events has changed the sector drastically in achieving the high impact factor. Hallmark Event has been one of the best solutions not only to create bigger crowds but to also promote and help the socio-culture around a selected area. This study attempts to enrich the previous semantic-tangle on hallmark event, thus broaden the gap of studies on hallmark event, specifically in Malaysia. The variables chosen to represent the semantic-tangle are loci/space, people/social, event/experience, and hallmark cultural impact. Using a fully quantitative method of research with a correlational research design, this study ought to prove the positive relationship between the variables, thus strengthening the previous gap done by previous researchers which would be applied specifically at Malaysia. Using convenience sampling of 100 visitors on the MAP Festival in 2013, this research managed to generate the descriptive statistic, reliability, validity, and the direct effect of each variables using Pearson Correlation. The results measured were strong relationship showing at least 0.60 positive, 2 tail significant relation between the variables loci/space, people/social, event/experience, and cultural impact of the hallmark event chosen. In gaining the high impact factor on a certain hallmark event in Malaysia, it is highly recommended that authorities would put into considerations of these loci, social, and event factor in determining a promising site specifically in Malaysia.

Author Keywords: *Hallmark Event; MAP Festival; Tourism; Malaysia*

1. INTRODUCTION

Place and events are strongly connected between each other that they could not possibly be isolated from the tourism industry. Unquestionably, how an event and a stage is fundamental, event and tourism destination works likewise. Events have been grooving many tourism locations, from an unidentified space towards a spectacular destination places attracting huge tourist audience.

Today the tourism industry has been one of the key economic progressions, leading second after the manufacturing sector in Malaysia (Thomas, 2012). Undeniably, the tourism industry sector has been contributing approximately 12% of the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Malaysia. Beyond this decent achievement, it is expected that the total profit from the tourism sector alone would produce a total boost of RM62 billion in 2012 (Thomas, 2012).

The government has acknowledged this accomplishment by allocating RM358 millions of money in conjunction with the visit Malaysia year 2013/2014. The budget shows an increase of 42% targeting 26.8 million tourist arrivals (Thomas, 2012). Due to the visit Malaysia year 2014, the government is confidence of attracting 28 million tourist flourishing Malaysia, alone at that year, majority of them are estimate to be from China, with an approximating total profit produced of RM68 billion produced from the tourism sector (Azli, 2013).

Speaking about contribution of the tourism industry towards the nation, it is impossible to disapprove that the achievements of the tourism sector until now is because of the well-planned events promoting Malaysia itself. During the Asian financial crisis on 1997-1998, which made the downturn of Malaysia's economy, event was one of the major contributors that help upswing the worse crisis indirectly. The crisis started on early July 1997, with the financial collapse of the Thai Baht. When this happens, the investors contributing towards Thailand and other neighboring countries including Malaysia loss confidence by withdrawing their investment units including from Kuala Lumpur Composite Index (KLCI) stock market index, now known as Bursa Malaysia.

The impact from this circumstance directly decreases the currency values of Asian currency in no time. The Malaysian ringgit lost about 40% of its value directly; the Indonesian rupiah was the most affected which it depreciated by 80%, where the Thai Baht lost 55% of its value. The Malaysian stock market lost about USD140 billion in a year after losing majority of its stock units on between the year 1997-1998 (Yen, 2009). Furthermore, within this tragic lost, the government spend a total of USD5 billion which is RM21 billion on combined mega-projects including the development of infrastructure and services such as Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Bukit Jalil International Stadium, and International Broadcasting Centre in conjunction with the Commonwealth games taking place in Malaysia (Yusof, 1998).

The commonwealth game was considered as a mega-event which acquired mega transformation on infrastructure, accommodation, transportation, public service, and entertainment for the mega-event audience. It was a grand mega-sport event for the first time in 68-years of history; the Commonwealth Games were to be held in Asia for the first time, with the chosen Asian country Malaysia. The decision was bid since 21 July 1992 at Barcelona, Spain six years before the event. Malaysian government had two opportunities; the first was to be the host of this huge mega-event at the same time leaving only six years to prepare for it (Commonwealth Games Federation, 2014). It was a first mega-event success for capturing large audience coming from both participant and Television viewers. Approximately 70 countries with a total 5,065 athletes were expected to flourish Malaysia, excluding coaches and supporters globally. This was a huge opportunity to gain massive incomes at the same time to spread enormous news promoting Malaysia indirectly.

Within the same year, the unexpected national financial crisis took part intensely starting between early July 1997 until the year 1998. In facing the devastating crisis, the Malaysian government introduced their monetary policy, despite lending from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which other Asian countries such as, Thailand, Indonesian, Philippines and others which came with a set of restricted regulation. The forth Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammad ordered the Central Bank of Malaysia to peg the Malaysian ringgit with an exchange rate of RM3.8 for a US dollar which was implemented as capital controls. Only the people who are staying in Malaysia would have to accept the exchange rate and the other currencies were too used outside the country (Yen, 2009). The stock market units purchased inside Malaysia in KLCI were also hold within a year before the owners could sell. The plan was essentially made to support the countries recovery plan.

On the First of September 1998, Malaysian Central Bank announced the control on foreign exchanged and implemented the capital controls of RM3.8 for a US dollar which was 10% higher than its existing value (Zubair, 2002). Thankfully, the implemented policy of increasing the Malaysian Ringgit value higher was 10 days before the huge mega-event (Commonwealth Games) took place in Malaysia. The Commonwealth games took part between the 11 to 21 September in the same year 1998. Massive audience and tourist supporter came to Malaysia to celebrate the huge mega-event more and less contributing to the recovery of Malaysia economy in terms of accommodation, transportation, services, foods, entertainments, and moreover exchanging their money to expenses using the implemented capital policy of RM3.8 for a US dollar.

The wide media coverage help improves the expectations of the world towards how well Malaysia managed to attain their economy and tourism value even at hard times. The real average GDP from the year 1996, 1997, and 1998 showed the increase on the next year by the percentage of 7.5% on the year 1997,

decreasing into -7.4 on the year 1998, and increasing back in the next year with positive 6.1%. This proves that the impact of the Commonwealth Games mega-event did make a difference for Malaysia on the next year in terms of Gross Domestic Value (GDP). The Pacific of the United Nation released on April 4, 2001 complemented Malaysia by stating "The experience of Malaysia suggests that capital controls can help stabilize an otherwise difficult situation" (Zubair, 2002). The capital lock was allowed to lapse in September 1999.

Furthermore, after witnessing the strong impact of events towards not only the tourism sector, but also the whole nation in terms of contributing to the revive of a national economy crisis. Positioning event as a fundamental potential contributing to tourism industry, it is crucial that each event regardless what categorical type should be planned and managed wisely as the impact would result to tourism destination.

Considering the strong impact of the Commonwealth Mega-Event Games on 1998, we may not know when the same opportunity would repeatedly strike back. Thus, it is important to prepare a plan for the better. In the National Tourism Policy 1992, it is recommended for planning, development, and marketing of tourism, it is stated that, there has been an important role for the tourism sector to accelerate urban/rural integration and cultural exchange which will create an improved image of Malaysia (MOCAT, 1992). Since then the Malaysian government has been spending a large amount of money to achieve that aspiration of promoting urban/rural places and integrating between each other. In the second Malaysian Plan the government allocated RM17.2 million, but on the seventh Malaysian Plan, the government allocated RM966 million which proves the increasing awareness of the importance of the tourism sector (Hall, 1997; Khalifah and Tahir, 1997).

In addition, to increase the awareness of potential places in Malaysia, several Hallmark events has been taking place in promoting the diverse in cultures towards variety of festival which one of them are 'Art'. Based on Ritchie's (1984) categorical types of hallmark event, one of the famous concepts to promote local art scene internationally is through unique carnivals and festivals. One of these popular unique carnival and festival hallmark events promoted by Malaysia is 1MOCAT festival which is known as '1Malaysia Contemporary Art Tourism'. On 23 June 2010, Malaysian minister of tourism, Ng Yen Yen launched the new ground breaking tourism product. The hallmark event is taking place afterwards each year within the duration period between July and September. This exclusive art scene event was an effort to stimulate the development of Malaysian local art scene, which is the first ever 'Contemporary Art' hallmark event of its kind. The Minister stated that "Since the first festival in 2010, we managed to attract 42,200 visitors and in the outcome, we successfully achieved RM14 million during the three month festival starting July until September", she also express her feelings that the ministry of tourism Malaysia did not expected such achievement.

Correspondingly, another distinguished and renowned hallmark event is MAP Festival also recognized as 'Melaka Art and Performance Festival' celebrated at Malacca. Rated as the third smallest state in Malaysia, Malacca has been listed as one of the World Heritage Site by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 7 July 2008 (UNESCO, 2008). Malacca is well known as the early location for Malay Sultanate, which was eliminated by the Portuguese when they conquered in 1511, this historical site have been developing over 500 years of trading and cultural cross pollinations between the East and West. Today Malacca is proud as the largest specific historical site listed by UNESCO, and to celebrate an amazing art and performance hallmark event festival MAP Festival.

Introduced by Tony Yap who is the Creative Executive Officer of his company 'Tony Yap Company', collaborating with Andrew Ching as producer together since 2009 (Tony Yap Company, 2012). The event is solely about the combination of dance, visual arts, film, and music performance making to absolutely unique compare to other of its kind. The location chosen, specifically 'A Famosa' as the main setting which is at the St. Paul's Hill, the event has been capturing strong attentions from audience from inside and outside of Malaysia participating while visiting.

Furthermore, what is amazing about this chosen hallmark event is how it was organized within a very limited duration of time which is three days out of 365 days a year which benchmarks it as a must attend event (Zhin, 2013). In 2012 alone, this wonderful hallmark event festival has managed to attract 20,000 audiences, where 4,000 alone were international tourist from all over the world (ETN Global Travel Industry News, 2012). This incredible festival has been conducted by Art & Performance festival Melaka Sdn Bhd and organized in collaboration with E-Plus Entertainment.

What can be concluded by the researchers, hallmark event has been a remarkable platform in shaping several places into tourism destinations, which at the same time increasing the consciousness of local art scene internationally. Therefore, it is important to study to what extent does the relationship of such event are related with place using the semantic-tangle loci, people, and event. Hence, if we could identify that relation and analysis the type of relation, it would definitely provide the tourism industry with adequate information and alternative on increase hallmark event cultural impacts in specifically in Malaysia, and generally the world.

2. METHODOLOGY

The researcher will be conducting a correlational research study, which aim of this research process is to look for relationship between the chosen variables. When correlational studies are done, they are three possible results, which are 1) positive correlation 2) negative correlation 3) no correlation. The coefficient of this study is measured by the correlation strength that range from -1.00 to +1.00.

According to Fiala (2011), correlational research focuses on identifying the degree in which variables relate with each other. He elaborates that variables consist of predictor which is the predicting variables and criterion the outcome variable. Correlational research is done to find the relationship between predicted variables and you do not measure or manipulate independent variable, traits, and characteristic. It also does not infer causation, where researchers do not find the cause or effect besides they find the relationship.

These relationships consist of linear or curvilinear which resembles weather the connections produce strong relationship, weak relationship, or no relationship at all. When doing a research between two variables the researcher can use bivariate correlation using Pearson correlation model in identifying weather the relationship is a -1 or +1. Positive correlation is above 0, and negative correlation is below 0. Correlational research helps us to predict the research for further experimental design (Fiala, 2011). When conducting a co-relational research it is crucial to conduct descriptive research, reliability, and validity test to ensure the researcher in on the right track and does not measure variables or instruments outside of the parameter given.

According to Nutt (2012), correlational research is a study on the existence of consistent, systematic relationship between variables, events, or measures. When you start to think and predict that between two variables there is a relationship then you into co-relational research study. The outcome of the research is to find the co-relational coefficient which is a statistic number ranging from -1.00 to +1.00 which the signs indicates the direction of relationship. The closer the statistic to -1.00 or to +1.00 the stronger the relationship is, however correlations of 0.00 demonstrates no relationship between the variables. Positive correlation is when the increase in one variable is matched by the increase in another, while Negative correlation is when the increase in one variable is matched by the decrease in the other. It is obvious that correlation does not demonstrate causation, just because two variables are related does not mean one variable cause the other to occur.

Delaney (2013) stated that co-relational research method should be supported by the reliability and validity test on the measurements and instruments. Cronbach Alpha is the test performed to measure the consistency of the instruments to improve reliability which reliability then contributes to validity. This statement is supported by Branson (2014) where he stated that validity is the accuracy of the

goal, and reliability is the consistency of instrument towards the goal, the goal here is to identify the relationship accurately and precisely.

Finally, the researcher understands that when conducting a correlational research study it is important to identify the set of variables. The researcher is doing non parametric test on the participants, so it is important to conduct descriptive research in establishing a systematic observation, thus leading to a better reliable outcome result.

The convenience sampling has been used by researchers from the study to collect data sample conveniently from a specific type of none probability of data collection from the population members. This is when the researcher does this sampling method to collect data from the existing population based one the availability of sample units at the time of distribution of data and collection. This method is the first available primary sample unit data source will be used by the researcher without other required information as for example the name of the participant and who does he represent in this event. The method is also acquired to make it possible for the researcher to avoid bias in selecting the people he needs to collect.

This sampling method is unique since everyone is invited to participate as long as they represent the sample population in the area, as for example in this research the people at A Famosa, Malacca coming to the MAP festival hallmark event are the population sample, thus any participant in the area are invited and can be selected to contribute to this research either they are host community, visitors, or tourist.

However they are some limitations in this type of study. Even if co-relational studies can prove the relationship between two variables, they cannot examine if one variable directly affects the other, which it does allow co-relational but not equal on causation, this is when other factors such as sample and dimension are wide to examine. Correlational research study is mainly to systematically observe variables which have potential relationship based on academic hypothesis and proven by analyzing the relationship direction of the variables linked, whether it is a positive variable or a negative variable.

The resulted relationship will be supported by reliability of the instrument on data collection. Nevertheless, correlational research study is to prove relationship and direction of them but not to find cause-effect. Cause-effect of a variable on which does cause or trigger which variables and the effects are done by further experimental research by researchers in the future after examining the co-relational previous research. This is the combination between both research study to produce clear conclusions by researcher and refined buy time making the selected issue always on track and up to date.

There are three types of correlational studies which are naturalistic observation, survey method, and archival research. The researcher is using the survey method of co-relational study which questionnaire is one of the frequent methods used in psychological research. In this type of method, convenience sample of participants complete a survey, test, or questionnaire relating to the variables of interest. In ensuring the holistic approach of the survey, convenience sampling is a done on using non-parametric analysis. The chosen event Malacca Art Performance (MAP) festival will be held each year within three unique days at one of the UNESCO historical rated site in Malaysia which is 'Kota A' Famosa'.

When the researcher has conducted the survey at such significant public space, there are two possibilities of the visitors to come. The visitors would possibly be audience coming for the event and visitor or tourist coming to visit the unique site of Malaysia. This makes the demographic and descriptive analysis dynamic which not all participants would come for the event. When they do not come for the event what would they expect from such a hallmark event established at such place. This is why hallmark event are made to not only promote an event but also bring crowds to the place it is conducted.

As result the advantages of the survey method, is because it is flexible compared to other methods. It is low costing, easy and faster. This helps researcher to collect large amount of data in a relatively short amount of time. In this study the four main variables loci/space, people/social, event/experience, and cultural impact/socio-culture. The variables are examined towards the hallmark performance impacts. Below in figure 3.1 is the proposed conceptual framework model.

3. ANALYSIS

The form of data analysis use by researcher is non-parametric data analysis. The convenience sampling has been used by researchers from the study to collect data sample conveniently from a specific type of none probability of data collection from the population members. This is when the researcher does this sampling method to collect data from the existing population based one the availability of sample units at the time of distribution of data and collection. This method is the first available primary sample unit data source will be used by the researcher without other required information as for example the name of the participant and who does he represent in this event. The method is also acquired to make it possible for the researcher to avoid bias in selecting the people he needs to collect. This sampling method is unique since everyone is invited to participate as long as they represent the sample population in the area, as for example in this research the people at A Famosa, Malacca coming to the MAP festival hallmark event are the population sample, thus any participant in the area are invited and can be selected to contribute to this research either they are

host community, visitors, or tourist. Getting these participants conveniently and availability is important. The advantage of the sampling method is that it consume less time duration and useful also for pilot test and developing hypotheses.

H1: The higher the loci of place, the higher the cultural impact of hallmark event

H2: The higher the people of place, the higher the cultural impact of hallmark event

H3: The higher the event of place, the higher the cultural impact of hallmark event

H4: There is positive relationship between place and hallmark event.

4. CONCLUSION

Researching on the relationship between place and hallmark event in the context of socio-culture, the researcher has come in to some variables such as loci, people, event, and social impact. All the systematically chosen variables have been tested in determining the direct relationship towards a good cultural hallmark event impact. The first objective is to examine the relationship between loci and cultural impact, this is proven by the Pearson correlation of ($r = .56$, $p < 0.01$). The second objective is to examine the relationship between people and cultural impact, this is proven by the Pearson correlation of ($r = .68$, $p < 0.01$). The third objective is to examine the relationship between event and cultural impact, this is proven by the ($r = .56$, $p < 0.01$). The fourth objective is to analyze the type of relationship between place (loci, people, event) and hallmark event (Cultural Impact), which can be seen as a positive relation from all the connection value based on the analysis. In order to support the hypothesis given by the researcher systematic quantitative study has been made with a proposed framework model using the variables for this research. The results do indicates that the proposed framework model is a valid model which can possibly be used by future researchers as this study is a correlation research study. Even though this research does not find the significance of cause-impact between the variables, never less this research has opened a wide scope in hallmark event studies especially in Malaysia on visual and performance art programed. At the same time, this research could be used by future researcher discussing areas of tourism and social culture as it does connect with the issue. Hence, in order to achieve our 2020 industrialized country which is independent in every aspect especially tourism and culture this study has come up with the framework model procedure for a strong prospect hallmark event.

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